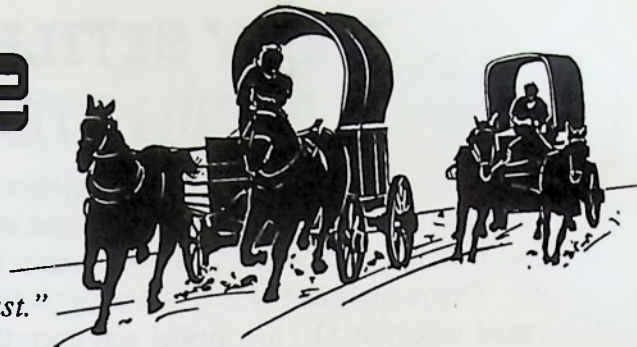


# The Historacle

*The Official Newsletter of the*

## Talent Historical Society

*"Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past."*



206 East Main, Suite C • P.O. Box 582 • Talent, Oregon 97540 • 541/512-8838

September 2003

## THE FUTURE OF THE TALENT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Because of the uncertainties THS is facing, we are attempting to streamline and reduce costs while still preserving and collecting historical documents and histories pertinent to the Talent area. There are several ways you can help us. Choose from the list below:

1. VOLUNTEER - we need quality volunteers who can contribute a couple of hours a week to the THS cause. We need organizers, fund-raisers, board members, and helpers of all sorts. Call 512-8838 for info on how you can contribute. A few of the Historical Societies are completely run by volunteers— it is possible here too if we can find some good helpers who want to learn how to manage the affairs of the society.
2. Pay your membership fees and donate a little extra. Funds go toward oral history and photo projects, storage, new site fund, supplies to keep our artifacts acid-free and safe, educational programing, the newsletter, etc.
3. Storage space is greatly needed. We currently store artifacts at an annual cost of about \$600.00. If we could find a safe, dry place for our artifacts, we could save a lot of money.
4. We need exhibit ideas. Our little display case could use a revamping once in a while. We have had many interesting displays but we could always use new ideas and new donors to loan us some old-time items that people would love to come in and see.

Thanks to the volunteers this year's Talent Harvest Festival was a success. We made many contacts, sold books, T-shirts, & memberships. Our visibility in the community is important and our participation in local events enhances our image and builds relationships. The people who stopped by the office or visited with the the volunteers at the booth shared stories & opinions so our profit for the day was not only monetary.

Please be ready for the annual membership meeting coming up in November. We haven't set a date yet but it will be before Thanksgiving and we will send out invitations to all our members. By the way, we are trying to get the email addresses of our members. Please call in or send us an email at [talenthistory@jeffnet.org](mailto:talenthistory@jeffnet.org)




# EARLY SETTLEMENT WOES IN TALENT: ORSON STEARNS RECOLLECTIONS

*EDITOR'S NOTE:* Orson Stearns, pioneer of 1853, settled in the Wagner Creek area approximately where the Stearns Cemetery lies today. These are some of his comments about those immediate early years of settlement in the Bear Creek Valley near Talent.

Orson Stearns writes: "When my father's family came in, in October 1853, it was difficult to obtain seed wheat at \$10 per bushel and everything else was correspondingly high." "My father traded Jacob Wagner a two-horse wagon worth \$200 for 100 hills of potatoes and dug them himself. Flour was selling for \$33 per hundred and the sacks would stand alone after the flour was emptied out, the flour having been packed across the coast mountains from Scottsburg during the rainy season, uncovered, until wet in from one half to two inches in depth which hardened into stiff dough and molded. All kinds of groceries were scarce and very high. The sugar we could get came in fifty pound mats (Chinese mats instead of barrels), and it was more like sand as it was ashy grey color and full of all kinds of filth. It was made in China, with the usual contempt for cleanliness that was characteristic of the coolie. My mother understood how to refine the sugar after which it resembled nice clean maple sugar, but was reduced in weight fully one fourth in the process. For coffee, parched corn, peas, and sometimes carrots and parsnips were used. Some people used browned bread crumbs making what was termed crust coffee." "The merchants in those days carried but little clothing except miners' supplies and people had to resort to picking up castaway clothing from the streets of Jacksonville, where it was the custom of the miners and the gamblers to throw their old or soiled clothing after purchasing new, and a large part of their castaway garments were simply soiled, and after washing, were nearly as good as new. As no children's clothing or footwear was obtainable, nor material for making them, the mothers of families were forced to make the clothing for their own children's wear.

"My father made lasts for the footwear of all the family except for himself, and my mother made shoes for the family, the uppers from castaway boots picked up on the streets of Jacksonville in front of the stores, the soles from harness or saddle leathers picked up from here and there. All flour sacks were carefully washed and used to make underwear, pillow cases, sheets, etc." "On account of the high prices and poor quality of the flour, potatoes and squashes were added to make it go farther, and often the adulterant was a perceptible improvement to the quality of the bread. A few wild plums were to be had along the streams, and elderberries were plentiful. They were used largely for sauces and pies and dried for winter use, while some made a very fine wine of them for use in case of sickness." "After the harvest of 1854, the amount of flour from outside was largely supplemented by boiled wheat, the course meal made by grinding wheat or corn in large coffee mills bought for that purpose. As wild game was plentiful, and after the first winter, beef was plentiful and of excellent quality, the fare of the settlers was much improved."



## ROOTED IN HISTORY

Where do we get the word "ketchup." Or is it "catsup"? Is there a difference?

The words "ketchup" and "catsup" both come from the Malay word "kechap." The original Malay word "kechap" itself only meant "taste." After the word migrated into English in the 17th century (as "catchup," still an accepted spelling), it was applied to a variety of sauces and condiments. It was only with the importation of the tomato to Europe from its native habitat in South America that what we now know as ketchup was born. Both "ketchup" and "catsup" are correct and accepted spellings for our modern tomato sauce with vinegar, sugar and spices.

--adapted from Evan Morris, *The Word Detective*



# BRIC-A-BRAC

New Exhibit:

Take a look at the new exhibit in the display case. Talent schools are featured with photographs, report cards, slates and memorabilia. We generously included a 1955 Talent year book that pictures our illustrious, Jackson County Commissioner, Jack Walker, in his freshman year.

A big thank you to these  
renewing members:

Kurt Bailey, Talent  
George & Colleen Baylor, Keizer, OR  
Poppie Beveridge, Talent  
Darrell & Roanne Clapp, Talent  
Paul & Nellie Creel, Talent  
Judy Drais, Medford  
Marilee Duce, Medford  
Nancy Fox, Talent  
Robert & Elizabeth Fulton, Talent  
Bud and Mary Louise Gleim, Talent  
Dwyane & Kathleen Guthrie, Philomath, OR  
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Marilyn & Ruddy Havill, Talent  
Myrna Holden, Live Oak, CA  
Genevieve Holdridge, Central Point  
Martha & Herman Joseph, Santa Rosa, CA  
Jack Latvala, Talent  
Rob & Stella Medinger, Talent  
Connie Miller, Medford  
John Morrison, Ashland  
Don & Carol Muir, Central Point  
Lianis Reichstein, Talent  
Carolynn Rutledge, Talent  
Bob & Pauline Sullivan, Ashland  
Bob & Claire Wilson, Talent  
*Your membership fees are due the 30th of  
September. We need your support more than  
ever.*

Welcome new members!

Greg & Ann Goebelt, Talent



Puppeteers  
Wagner Creek School  
THS # 998.3.8.2

Civil War buffs came out of the woodwork for the Aug. 9th Chautauqua Program.

Those who attended "The Last Rose" presentation by Bill and Carla Coleman had a magnificent treat when the love letters of George Boatwright to his intended Mattie Burrows were brought to light.

An informative question and answer session followed the performance but if you are still wondering about any aspect of the Civil War or what happened to Mattie Burrows you can contact Bill and Carla on their website [www.colemanscivilwar.com](http://www.colemanscivilwar.com) Their CD's are on sale at the Talent Historical Society.

## THS Membership Levels

Individual	\$10.00
Individual Sponsor	\$20.00
Family	\$15.00
Family Sponsor	\$30.00
Business Sponsor	\$50.00

## Heritage Societies

Eli K. Anderson Society	\$100.00
John Beeson Society	\$250.00
Jacob Wagner Society	\$400.00
A.P. Talent Society	\$500.00
Lifetime Membership	\$1,000.00 (one-time)



# WHERE DID THE OREGON TRAIL WIND?

NOTE: The following material was provided by the National Park Service's description of the Route of the Oregon Trail. The Oregon California Trail Center in Montpelier, Idaho, provided the data below. Members with computers may contact them at the following URL: [www.oregontrailcenter.org](http://www.oregontrailcenter.org) or at [www.oregontrailcenter.com](http://www.oregontrailcenter.com), as well as [www.oregontrailcenter.net](http://www.oregontrailcenter.net) for additional information on the Trail.

The route of the Oregon National Historic Trail begins at Independence, Missouri. The emigrants followed the older Santa Fe Trail to the southwest for about 40 miles, then headed northwest for the Platte River. Emigrants crossed the rolling hills of the eastern Great Plains, bisected by numerous rivers and streams, such as the Wakarusa, Kansas, Red Vermillion, Black Vermillion, and Big Blue Rivers. They followed the Little Blue River valley (into Nebraska), and when the river turned south, they continued northwest to the broad Platte River valley.

The emigrants followed the Platte River to its confluence in western Nebraska, crossed the South Platte near California Hill, and descended in the North Platte valley through Ash Hollow. After Ft. Laramie, the first major stopping place on the trail, emigrants moved northwest over the dry ranges connecting the meanders of the North Platte River, crossed and left the North Platte at present-day Casper, headed southwest across the high range country of Wyoming toward Independence Rock.

After South Pass which many emigrants considered to be the halfway point of their trip, they crossed the Dry Sandy and the Big Sandy and eventually reached the welcome grass, and shade of the Green River. They then proceeded to Fort Bridger, the second of the major resupply points along the trail, which was then a small and isolated fur trading post.

After Fort Bridger the emigrants went over the rugged Bear River Divide, followed the Bear River into Idaho, and then left it to head across the desert toward Fort Hall, on the banks of the Snake River. Fort Hall was a fur trading post operated by the Hudson's Bay Company. It was

also a supply point and aid station for the weary emigrants.

After Fort Hall the emigrants followed the Snake River through southern Idaho. They forded the Snake River at Three Island Crossing whenever possible. Once across, they skirted the mountains north of the Snake toward Fort Boise, another Hudson's Bay Company trading post, and another spot where rest and resupply were possible before crossing the Snake. Approximately half of the emigrants were unable to cross the river at Three Island Crossing, and were forced to use the 126-mile South Alternate Route. Days of hot and dusty travel along the south bank of the Snake awaited emigrants before they could rejoin the main route just west of Fort Boise.

After Fort Boise the emigrants crossed the arid rangeland of eastern Oregon, broken by the Malheur River, and met the Snake for the last time

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Talent Historical Society

P.O. Box 582 / 206 E. Main Street  
Talent Community Center • Talent, Oregon 97540

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Comments & letters may be sent to the Editor, **The Historacle**, by mail or by e-mail [casebeer@jeffnet.org](mailto:casebeer@jeffnet.org). Members of the Society receive **The Historacle** free with membership.



# **WILLIAM PARKER, MEMBER OF THE SOUTH ROAD PARTY**

## **SETTLED FINALLY ON THE GREENSPRINGS. OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PARTY DESCRIBED BELOW, FIFTEEN IN ALL**

The men who were in the party from Polk County who were determined to find a Southern Road to Oregon, thus bypassing the dangers of floating the Columbia River, or the harrowing passage on the Barlow Road south of Mt. Hood, are often subsumed by the overpowering presence of Jesse Applegate. However, while many of the party were in some way connected to the Applegates, by friendship or by relationship, the memory of their activities are seldom mentioned. One such member of the party was William Parker, who came back to Southern Oregon and settled on the Greensprings section of the Applegate Trail.

William Parker was Jesse Applegate's brother-in-law (Applegate's wife's brother). He was born in 1822. He could swim very well and saved himself in a fall in the Columbia River in 1843 when others in the emigrant party were not successful in saving their lives. After participating in the South Road Expedition, the official name of the exploration to find a Southern route to the Oregon country, he moved to Southern Oregon and by the 1860s was operating a stage coach stop between Ashland and Klamath Falls called Parker's Station. The highest pass over the Greensprings Highway surmounts Parker Mountain, named after William Parker. He married the daughter of an old mountain man, Capt. Solomon Tetherow.

The other members of the exploratory party included many now famous Oregonians, and some who disappeared into the darkness of history. Others included:

**Jesse Applegate**, the renowned sage of Yoncalla. At sixteen Applegate went to work for the Missouri Surveyor General's Office. While there he met Jedediah Smith and William Sublette, the fur company explorers, as well as William Clark, the second in command of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He became Deputy Surveyor General of Missouri. In 1831 he married Cynthia Parker and emigrated to Oregon in 1843, settling first in Polk County. He worked for the Territorial Government of Oregon and was appointed the first Surveyor General in 1844. While several attempts had been made to find an acceptable southern route to Oregon, Jesse was appointed captain of the third and successful road exploration party in 1846. He and his family moved to Yoncalla north of Roseburg in 1848, taking out a donation land claim north of the present city of Yoncalla. In 1866, having volunteered to underwrite a bond for the state treasurer who got into fiscal difficulty, Applegate lost all of his holdings. He went to California to work in 1872 and returned to Yoncalla where he spent his last days growing grapes in the first vineyard in Douglas County. He died in 1888.

**Lindsay Applegate**, who later owned the Toll Road south of Ashland which controlled the route over the Siskiyou, finally selling to Dollarhide in the 1860s. Lindsay was also an Indian agent in Klamath Falls. Several members of Lindsay's family lived in Ashland.

**Levi Scott** came to Oregon in 1844 with his son John. He had tried to find a Southern Route into Oregon earlier than the successful third attempt in 1846, but had to abandon the expedition when four men deserted the party, making the group of explorers very vulnerable to Indian attacks. Jesse Applegate came to him early in 1846 and asked if he would be willing to try again with 14 other dedicated men. Levi dropped his work and fell in with the party at once. He was the primary scout for the South Road Exploratory Party and was chiefly responsible for locating the route followed. He led the first wagon train over what is now called the Applegate Trail, and warded off the slings and arrows of emigrant Jesse Quinn Thornton and others because of the terrible events on the road through the Umpqua Canyon south of present day Canyonville. He knew he could take wagons through the Southern Route in a faster time, and a year later in 1847 did exactly that, establishing the South Road as a viable alternative to the float trip down the



**Continued from page 5**

Columbia River or over the Barlow Road.

Levi Scott founded the town of Scottsburg in 1850 which for the next few years was the largest seaport in Oregon, and the only supply point for miners in Southern Oregon and Northern California until Crescent City was founded. He was a member of the Territorial Legislature. He died while visiting his son John's place in Malheur County at the age of 93, having just completed his memoirs. Scott Mountain which looms over Glide in Douglas County is named after him, as well as Scott Valley east of Yoncalla, and Mount Scott on the east side of Crater Lake. There are those historians who feel the Southern Route should have been called the Scott Trail.

**John Morgan Scott**, Levi's son, was born in Illinois in 1827, one of the 13 children in the Scott family. John crossed the plains with his father in 1844 and then accompanied his father on the South Road Expedition in 1846. In 1848 he took up a donation land claim at the foot of the Calapooya Mountains east of Yoncalla on Elk Creek, which today is traversed by I-5. He later sold his claim to Charles Applegate, another of the Applegate brothers. Around 1880, he moved to Malheur County where he died in 1905.

**Robert Smith** was another member of the party, and two years later he went to California to try his luck in the gold fields. He returned to Yoncalla in 1849 and took out a donation land claim. The next year he married Charles Applegate's daughter Susan and was a successful farmer in that area until he died in 1888. Members of the family still live in Yoncalla.

**Moses Harris**, born about 1800 in Union County, South Carolina, and was believed to be a freed slave. He was a famous mountain man and made many fur hunting expeditions between St. Louis and the Rocky Mountains in the 1830s. It is thought that Jesse Applegate had met him in St. Louis. Moses spoke the Snake Indian language very well. It was said of Moses that he had so much stamina and endurance that whoever gave out on an expedition with him, that person was abandoned to his fate in the wilderness. He was painted in the 1830s by Alfred Jacob Miller. Miller observed that he was "wiry of frame, made up of bone and muscle with a face composed of tan leather and whipcord finished up with a peculiar blue black tint, as if gun powder had been burnt into his face." In 1836 Moses Harris served as guide for missionary Marcus Whitman and his wife for part of their trip to Oregon. After the South Road Expedition, Moses left the Willamette Valley in 1847 for St. Louis, Missouri. He died there of typhoid fever in 1849, and the epitaph on his grave reads as follows:

Here lies the bones of Old Black Harris  
Who often traveled beyond the Far West  
And for the Freedom of Equal Rights  
He crossed the Snowy Mountain heights  
Was a free and easy kind of soul,  
Especially with a belly full.

**William Sportsman** came with the immigration of 1845 and settled in the Tualatin Valley west of present Portland. He left Oregon in 1846 after the road exploration and was last known to be in California in 1847.

**David Goff** was born in Virginia in 1795. When he was 17 years old, he enlisted and served in the War of 1812. Moving to Kentucky in 1814 he married Kezziah Ford, shortly thereafter moving with his new family to Missouri. He emigrated to Oregon in 1844, settling in Polk County in 1845 near Jesse Applegate. On the South Road Expedition, Goff was the second in command. Levi Scott gave credit for much of the success of the expedition to Goff. His good sense and wise decision making often saved the day. David Goff's daughter married James Nesmith, Oregon's senior U. S. Senator during the Civil War.

**John Owens** had crossed the plains in 1844 with his father. It is thought that he joined the South Road Exploration party in 1846 with the intention of meeting his mother and escorting her from Fort Hall, now Idaho, the rest of the way. He met her at Fort Hall and took her the rest of the way to the Willamette Valley.

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**Continued on page 7**



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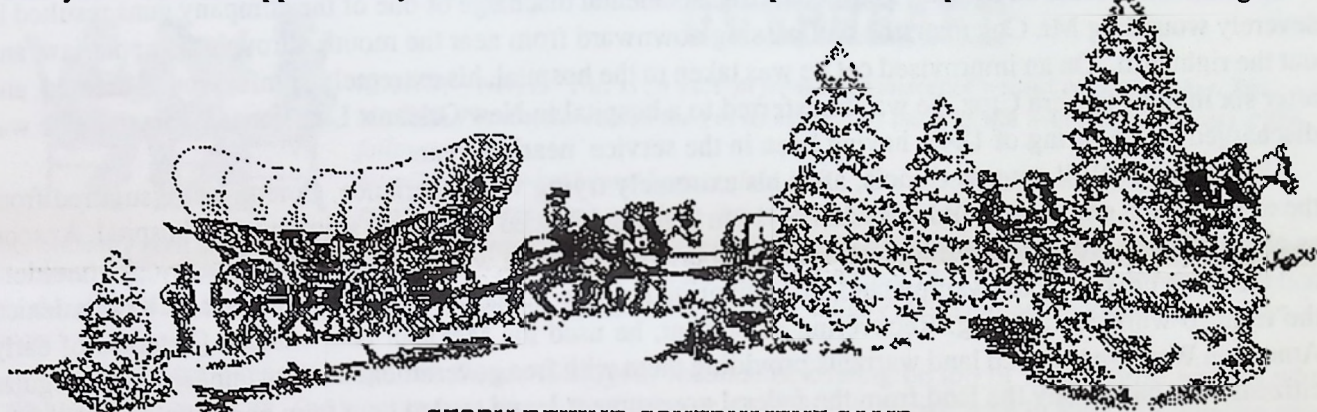
**Bennet or Benjamin Osburn**—no information after 1846.

**Henry Boyque** left the party that was continuing on to Fort Hall for supplies. He wanted to return to Missouri, so he attempted to catch up with a party that had left Fort Hall a day or so before he arrived. He was alone during this undertaking and was probably killed by Indians. His horse and gear were identified on an Indian about a year later. He was never heard from again, and didn't make it back home to Missouri.

**John Jones** traveled a lot after the road expedition. He settled in California and is believed to have died in Idaho.

**Samuel Goodhue** was born in Maine in 1813 and came to Oregon by sea on Capt. Couch's ship the "Cheinaus." He married Laurinda Davidson in 1849. He was a cabinetmaker by trade and was in business with W. S. Barker until dissolving their partnership in 1852. He then returned to Ohio.

**Ben Burch** was born in Missouri in 1825. He came to Oregon in 1845, and married in 1848. He settled on a donation land claim in Polk County, where he owned a flour mill. He served in the Cayuse Indian War as an assistant to a commanding officer and as Captain of the Polk County Volunteers in the Rogue Indian wars in 1855-56. For most of his later career, he was active in Oregon politics. In 1857, he served as a delegate to the Territorial Convention. In 1858, he was elected to the state senate and served four years. He was appointed by Governor Chadwick to the position of Superintendent of the Oregon



#### **STORY BEHIND GOVERNMENT CAMP ON THE MT. HOOD BARLOW ROAD**

Government Camp began in 1849. This was when the first U.S. regiment of Mounted Riflemen crossed the plains into Oregon country arriving at the Dalles. Most of the troops and their equipment were transported downriver to Vancouver, Washington by boat. The remaining troops expected to follow when boats became available. Plans changed, however, and the troops were ordered to proceed to Oregon City by the Oregon Trail. Bugged down by mud and snow, with half of the livestock lost or dead and soldiers near total exhaustion, Lt. David Frost abandoned 45 Cavalry wagons in October, 1849, before starting down Laurel Hill. Their noted presence beside the Barlow Road became the namesake of the alpine village—Government Camp. The Barlow Road allowed thousands of Oregon Trail emigrants to travel overland to the Willamette Valley rather than risk floating the dangerous Columbia River. The route skirted today's Ranger Station, located just across Highway 26, and passed within feet of this location. Travelers went on through what is now the village of Government Camp, proceeding west toward the infamous Laurel Hill.

Located two miles west of Government Camp, the challenging Laurel Hill descent earned a reputation among pioneers as a troublesome part of the Oregon Trail. Emigrants had to lower wagons down a series of steep rocky chutes from ropes snubbed to trees, or drag big logs behind them in hopes they wouldn't careen down the ravines.

"Come to Laurel Hill. This is the worst hill on the road from the states to Oregon..." Diary of Absalom Harden, 1847.



# TALENT AREA BIOGRAPHIES

## MATTHEW HUBBARD COLEMAN, MEXICAN WAR VETERAN THE MAN AFTER WHOM COLEMAN CREEK IS NAMED

Matthew Hubbard Coleman was an Oregon Pioneer of 1853, but had a very eventful life prior to emigration, a life characterized by a hard struggle for existence and interrupted by unexpected and discouraging obstacles. The writer of his biography in the Portrait and Biographical Record of Western Oregon in 1904 remarked, regarding Coleman's varied past: "That he is at present comfortably located on his pleasant and profitable little farm of 56 acres on Wagner Creek, Jackson County, argues well for his perseverance, and brave acceptance of adversity and misfortune."

Coleman's boyhood days were spent on a farm near the Pennsylvania line in Ashtabula County, Ohio, where he was born February 19, 1826, and where his father was the genial host of a well conducted country tavern. He remained at home until twenty years of age, and then bade adieu to the old familiar scenes and made his way to near Joliet, Illinois, where he worked on a farm for a year.

The outbreak of the Mexican War, in 1846, enlisted the sympathies of many young men near Joliet, and Matthew, inspired with patriotic fervor, became a soldier in Company B., Sixth Illinois Volunteer Infantry. He started on the march with a disposition to rout the enemy at whatever cost, but, alas for the plans of men! He was doomed to spend his time on a hospital cot, while his fellows-in-arms did the fighting and took the glory. When near Vera Cruz, on Mexico's east coast, the accidental discharge of one of the company guns resulted in severely wounding Mr. Coleman, the ball passing downward from near the mouth, through the upper jaw, and out the right arm. On an improvised cot he was taken to the hospital, his extremely painful wound dressed, and after six months in Vera Cruz, he was transferred to a hospital in New Orleans, Louisiana. While there he was discharged in the spring of 1848, having been in the service nearly a year.

Returning to Will county, Illinois, after his extremely trying war experience, Coleman still suffered from the effects of the gunshot wound, his whole system being debilitated in the long sojourn in the hospital. As soon as able he began working, hauling logs for a lumber company, and while thus employed, his weak condition, and the close proximity to swampy land, brought on acute ague [malaria] and for another period he was denied the right to work for a living. Recovering somewhat, he used his Mexican land warrant [Veterans of early American Wars were issued land warrants providing them with free government land, as opposed to the regular citizens who had to buy the land from the federal government.], and settled on a farm near Rockford, Illinois, remaining there until crossing the plains in 1853.

Mr. Coleman had been perfecting plans for his emigration all through the winter, and was accompanied by his brother John, Absalom Geddings, and Lewis Sicily, all eager to reach a country which afforded such excellent opportunities for youth and ambition. The journey was uneventful compared with that of some of the earlier emigrants, and upon arriving in Oregon Mr. Coleman worked in the mines in the eastern part of the state for a year and a half [probably in the John Day near Canyon City]. For a year he also worked in the Sterling mines, out of Jacksonville, Oregon, where he had two placer mines, and realized quite a little money therefrom.

Afterward, he moved to an improved ranch on Coleman Creek, and in 1892 located on Wagner Creek near Talent, where he engaged in raising general produce and some stock. He still owned his old farm of 160 acres near Phoenix, but rented it, and devoted his own energies to a less arduous responsibility.

On August 13, 1865, at age 39, he married Sabra A. Goddard, daughter of Blinn C. Goddard, who came to Jackson County, Oregon, in 1864. Seven children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Coleman: Elmer G.; Marcia, the wife of John Robinson; William R., a resident of Phoenix, Oregon; James B., who lived on the home ranch in 1904; Edith; Edgar E.; and Arthur R., the two latter being deceased in 1904.

Coleman was said when his biography was recorded in 1904 "to lead a quite uneventful life, caring little for political undertakings, and devoting his entire time to his farm and home. He is esteemed for his brave struggle for a competence, for his good name, and invariable consideration for all with whom he comes in contact.

*Editor's note: It is this man whose memory is recorded solely in our area by the name of Coleman Creek, a stream lying west of Talent, which flows ultimately into Bear Creek near Phoenix.*



# DOWNSTREAM CALENDAR

Talent Historical Society Museum,

Talent Community Center.

Museum Open hours:

Mon.—Fri. 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

## THS Board Meeting

Talent Library

Oct. 20, 6:00 p.m.

Nov. 17, 6:00 p.m.

Dec. 15, 6:00 p.m.

## JCHMA Meeting, 2nd Thursday of each month, 10 a.m. – Noon. Location varies.

Oct. 9

Nov. 13

Dec. 11

## Membership Fees Due

Sept. 30

## Continued from page 4

at Farewell Bend. They then turned northwest toward the Columbia River at The Dalles and the John Day and Deschutes Rivers, finally descending into the Columbia River valley just east of The Dalles.

The overland portion of the trail ended at The Dalles until 1846, when the Barlow Road was opened. Before that time, the emigrants built rafts to travel down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver, and then up the Willamette River to Oregon City. After 1846 most emigrants preferred to head south from The Dalles to Tygh Valley and then west across the southern shoulder of Mount Hood on the Barlow Road. They then crossed the Cascade Range at Barlow Pass and descended into Oregon City.



## OVERHEARD

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This is an excerpt from a reminiscence written by Martha Ann Tuttle McClain. The article can be read in its entirety by those of you with Internet access at the following URL:*

*<http://www.over-land.com/diarymccclain.html> The section below begins as the party crossed the Greensprings, which she calls the Siskiyou Mountains. The spelling has*

*occasionally been altered by Mrs. McClain's transcriber, but in the main the lack of capitals, contemporary punctuation, etc. are as Mrs. McClain wrote her reminiscence. Her husband and she moved north from the Rogue Valley; the reference to her husband's military service indicates that he was one of the men engaged in military action during the Rogue River Indian wars.*

"Now we are almost through the Siscue (Siskiyou) mountains, coming on top of a high ridge we saw what gladdened all our heart. The woman (sic) threw their bonnets up in the air for we were in sight of Civiliation once more. That night we camped near a house. This place belonged to a man that had came with most of us from the Missouri river. His wife invited some of us to take a walk with her to see (her) garden, it did our eyes good to see a garden growing once more. And when i saw the squashes i told her i would have my husband come in the morning before we left to get one. After he got it (he) asked the price, \$1.00, so after that for many years we raised the dollar Squash in Rogue River valey. Well we moved on down Bear creck (Bear Creek) near jacksonville. Here we camped while the men went out to look for land. In a few days they all dame back well pleased and we seperated, each family to take possession of their donation claim. With our family of 3 children we took up our claim 15 miles North of jacksonville. This was in the fall of Fifty 3. And now we must begin life anew. We got a little log house up to live in and the wild grass & clover was good, so we had plenty of milk & Butter. My Husband bought a new Plough and comenced to open a new farm. Now our first seed wheat cost us 5 (?) dollars per bushel so two bushels was all we could get. So in the spring of 54 we sowed that.

During this summer we ploughed ground enough to sow the entire crop from the two bushels. Now our thrasting (threshing?) machine was a rail pen four rails high covered with rails. ON this we laid the wheat, a few bundles at a time, then [took] a long stick and beat it out. When done threshing we took a canvass, put into that a small amount of wheat at a time. Taking this by the four corners we cleaned out the chaff by the wind seperating the wheat from the chaff. In the spring of 55 we sowed our crop and harvested it, threshed it out with horses this time, got a fanning Mill, cleaned it al[l] up, put it in the bin. We thought we were going finely but Oh horrors we had only ben working for the Indians all this time. For on Oct[ober] the 10 1855 the first battle was fought between the whites and indians which has already gone into history. And now my husband being dead i am living off the Pension granted by the goverment for labour done by the Volunteers of Oregon. The end.



## STEARNS CEMETERY—REPOSITORY OF TALENT HISTORY

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article has been taken from a website operated by the Southern Oregon Historical Society. Some editing has been done to the original material.*

### EDITORIAL

Few places can tell the actual story of pioneer days in Southern Oregon as can this hilltop cemetery nestled among gracious oaks, pines and madrones. Triumph and tragedy were interlocking forces in the settlement of the Rogue River Valley and Stearns Cemetery is the silent recorder and narrator of their impact. A block of marble at the front of a large gravesite shows oxen pulling a covered wagon. Faded words on a much smaller headstone near the cemetery entrance read:

"May 21, 1883, loved 2 hrs., 29 min. She was but a smile which glistens in a tear - seen but a little while - but, O how loved, so dear!"

Close by is the burial site of John Beeson, a controversial figure, who had to flee his family and home in 1856 because of his strong and vocal views about Indian rights. For almost 10 years he labored for their cause in the political arenas of the East, returning to his home shortly before the death of his wife Ann in 1867. His writings and efforts mark him as one of the West's first human rights advocates.

This graveyard takes its name from one of the first families which travelled the Oregon Trail. Six adult children with their widowed father, Reverend John Stearns, arrived in the area as early as 1853. On October 28, 1857, "Judge Avery P. Stearns was buried near David Stearns' wheat- field," according to the Welborn Beeson diary. Shortly thereafter, upon the death of one of his daughters, Orson Stearns donated 4.5 acres from his original land claim for a public cemetery. Another six acres were added to the property by the Odd Fellow's Lodge some years later.

Many of the people buried in the cemetery no longer have family to care for their graves, so the Wagner Creek Cemetery Association operates and maintains the cemetery. The Stearns graveyard has been memorialized by the State Legislature.

Further information on many families can be found at the Talent Historical Society, 206 E. Main. (541) 512-8838. Directions: I-5 exit 21; west on Valley View Road to Talent city center. Turn right on Talent Avenue, left on Main Street that curves left and becomes Wagner Creek Road. At the 3-way stop turn right and continue on Wagner Creek Road. Turn right on Anderson Creek Road. The cemetery will be on your left. The cemetery is about 2 miles south of Talent. Open daylight hours.

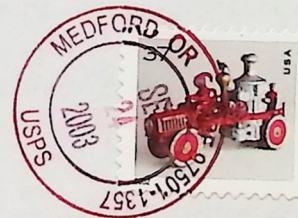


*Happy  
Harvesttime!*



### TALENT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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